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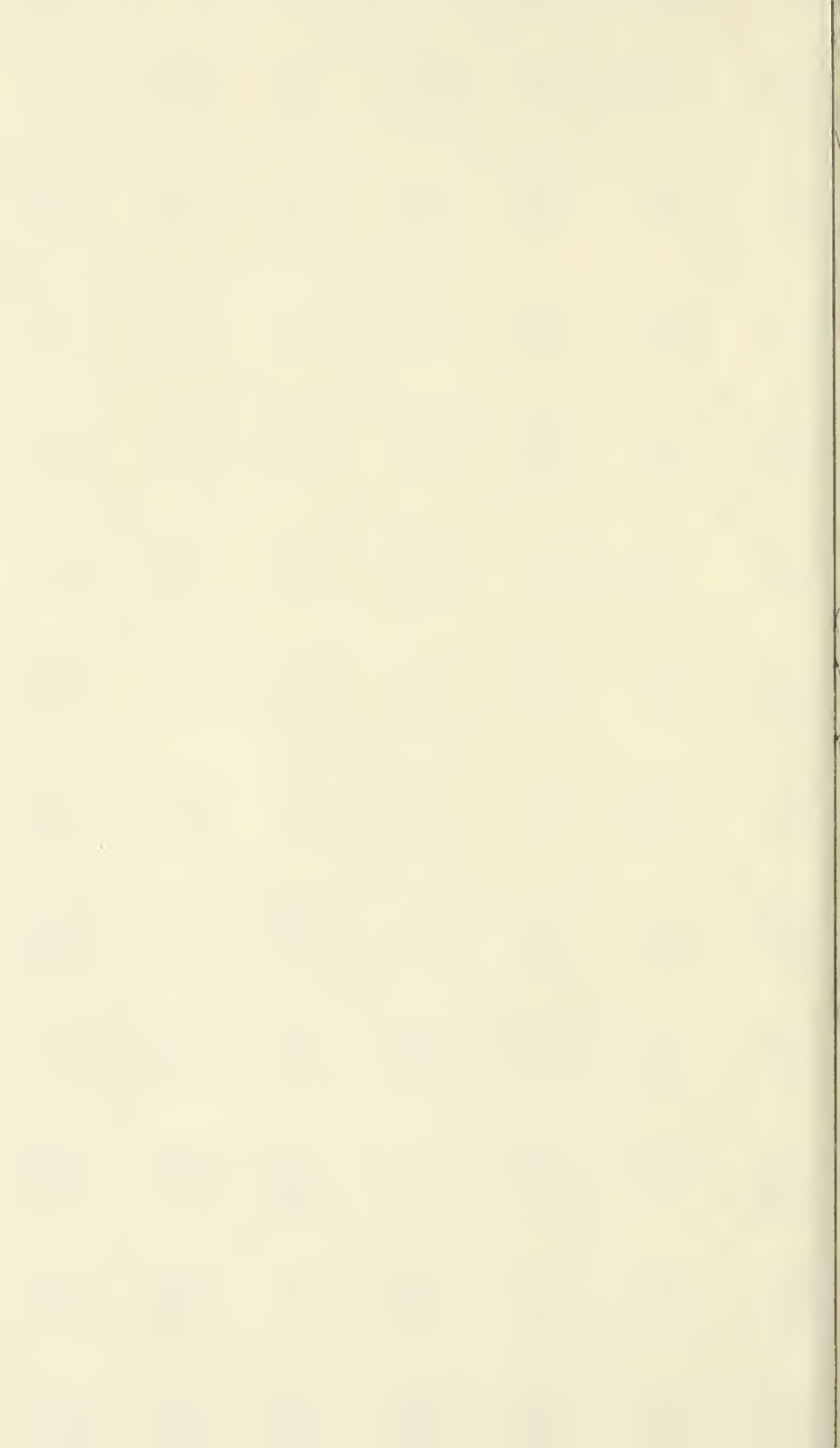
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AN

APPEAL

TO THE

PEOPLE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

ON

THE TEXAS QUESTION.



BOSTON:

CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN.

1844.

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A P P E A L .

THE course pursued by the Administration in reference to the annexation of Texas renders a crisis inevitable. As the policy is developed, —as its consequences begin to be seriously contemplated, —as the spirit of the movement is clearly manifested, —the people of the Free States will cease to be apathetic, and, under the circumstances which may arise, can hardly fail to become intensely excited. The tone of the Message and of Mr. Calhoun's correspondence has at once deprived the Northern advocates of the measure of the advantage of a prudent and " humbugging " policy. Mr. Calhoun's views have exploded the theory, seized upon with avidity by some who have evidently been desirous of misleading others, that the annexation of Texas might tend to the abolition of slavery. It is now clear that the only design of the measure — the *avowed* design, too — is, to fortify, extend, and perpetuate the slave-holding power ; to insure to the Slave-holding States the control of the General Government for all domestic purposes ; and to make the General Government, in their hands, instrumental in effecting a foreign policy which shall place this country in immediate and constant hostility to England upon the great question of universal emancipation, and in reference to all measures and interests connected therewith.

Now, that this is a project as dangerous as it is wicked, and as alarming as it is bold, will be seen — and it may be pre-

sumed that it is already *seen* and *felt* — by the great mass of the people of the Free States. The Message and its accompanying documents have scarcely yet reached the extremities of the Free States ; but such was the prevailing anxiety in advance of their reception, that it cannot be doubted they will be universally and eagerly read at the earliest possible moment, — and that, as soon as they are read, there will be but one feeling in regard to what is about to be attempted by the Administration, and in respect to the duty, to the extent of what is practicable, of defeating such an attempt.

The chief point for consideration is, therefore, *What is practicable?* Some appear to be too faint-hearted to think long enough to answer this question. But with a little consideration, we may be able to answer it in such terms as not only to suggest a practicable course, but to encourage us to pursue it.

In the first place, let it be suggested that it must be much easier to concentrate public sentiment in the Free States upon the question of Annexation, now that it can be presented as a distinct issue, — not connected with an election, — than when it was merged, by common consent, in the support of candidates for the Presidency, the position of no one of whom, or at most of only one, (Mr. Polk,) was unquestionable or unequivocal in respect to this subject *in all its bearings*. No Whig can fail to admit that the Whig party, in many of the Free States, was seriously embarrassed and weakened by the letters of Mr. Clay upon this subject ; and deeply as it is regretted, and clearly as it now appears to have been a fatal error of policy, the unwillingness of many zealous and honest Abolitionists to come in to the support of Mr. Clay is in some measure palliated by the consideration, that they could only be expected to support Mr. Clay for the sake of opposing Mr. Polk, — and that his friends had no warrant for claiming in behalf of Mr. Clay any principles or opinions which could entitle him to the confidence and sympathy of those who considered this question, primarily, if not solely, *in its connection*

with slavery. The Whigs in the Free States were also all the while deterred from arguing the Texas question upon its broad merits, through the fear of producing a dangerous reaction in the Slave-holding States, *whose votes they unfortunately relied upon.* In some degree, occasionally, incidentally, sufficiently to show that they recognized and concurred in the public sentiment of their own communities, they alluded to it in speeches, and introduced it into Resolutions ; but, *as a party,* with the exceptions which will be stated, they did not attempt to make the election *turn* upon it. No : in justice to an important view of the subject, but without the slightest wish to reproach the Whigs of the Free States, let the truth be confessed, — that their position, their candidate, their relation to Southern Whigs, the fatal idea that they were sure to succeed without doing so in the North, and in part by reason of not doing so in the South, the prevalent disposition amongst them to abstain from any seeming coöperation in the measures of Abolitionists, combined to deter them from making the Texas question the main issue in the election, and from occupying that decisive position in regard to it, which might have secured to them the vote of every Free State, — or would have placed them, as a defeated party, in an attitude of moral dignity and hearty union, the surest vantage-ground for a final struggle.

The Whig Free States entitled to be exempted from the application of the foregoing remarks are MASSACHUSETTS and VERMONT. In both of these States the Whigs ventured to speak and act openly and boldly, and to commit themselves in reference to future action upon the slavery issues. In both of these States, instead of purposely avoiding to do so, the Whigs aimed to make their candidates for State offices such as were beyond doubt or suspicion upon these points ; and throughout the canvass, in a course of deliberative discussion which proved that they were contending for principles, the Whig speakers labored effectively to exhibit the most striking views of this great topic, — TEXAS AND SLAVERY, “*one and*

inseparable." The result shows that what was thus done is what should have been done ; and it shows, too, with what power and to what extent public opinion has already declared itself in these two States, when indirectly appealed to for the purpose, — and what may be expected of *them*, when the call is made to rally exclusively for the vindication of the rights of Free States, and of free citizens of the Union, against the arrogant, unconstitutional, and mercenary demands of the slave-holding power.

To some extent, the prevailing policy of the Whigs, in abstaining from presenting a direct issue upon the Texas question, was adopted by their opponents in the Free States. Absurd as such a course appears, it was the course pursued by an important section of the Democratic party in New York, to give their support to Mr. Polk, under a faintly uttered protest against the recognition of his principles and purposes in regard to the annexation of Texas, — coupled with a concerted effort to elect such Democratic members of Congress as would not coöperate in carrying them into effect. Nowhere in that State was the election contested upon the Texas issue, fairly and fully presented ; and it is impossible to investigate the proceedings of the Democratic party in detail, without reaching the conclusion, that many of the leaders are in reality opposed to Annexation, — and that all of them acted cautiously, upon the presumption that the party could not be carried for the measure, if openly and unconditionally proposed. In New York, still further, as the result of the election, the electoral vote of the State was given to Mr. Polk, merely because upwards of fifteen thousand opponents of Annexation were not prepared to support Mr. Clay, and, by running a third ticket, — although they thereby contributed to place Mr. Polk in a minority, — made themselves instrumental in securing all the political, and, so far as it is misunderstood, all the moral, effect of a triumph to *the candidate of a minority*. Where the facts are not misunderstood, it is seen that Mr. Polk has received the

electoral vote of New York in opposition to the declared wishes of a majority of her citizens, — and that he has thereby, against the true voice of the people, become the President elect. Upon analyzing the result, and obtaining an explanation of some unusual facts, it has been satisfactorily shown, that, had the election in New York turned upon the Texas question, — had but two candidates been proposed as representing the opposite sides of that question, — and had all party and personal considerations not affecting that question been for the time foregone, — the decision of New York would have been as emphatically pronounced against Annexation as has been the decision of Massachusetts and Vermont.

What is thus inferred from notorious and striking facts in regard to the public sentiment in New York may unquestionably be assumed in reference to most of the other Free States whose electoral votes have been given to Mr. Polk. In Michigan the result was precisely analogous to that in New York ; the choice having been secured to Mr. Polk, as the highest candidate, by a *minority* of votes, in consequence of a considerable support of a third ticket by the Abolitionists. In New Hampshire and Maine, there may be less reason than elsewhere for imputing to the leaders, or to the body of the "Democracy," the honorable motive of being incapable of surrendering unconditionally and irrevocably, without honor and without benefit, the rights and interests which belong to them as Free States ; still, even in New Hampshire and in Maine, facts are not wanting to prove that a right spirit is beginning to manifest itself, and that even there party discipline will prove insufficient to force a wrong decision upon a question which a free people must in the end resolve to understand and decide for themselves.

Many details might be added which would fortify the position, that the recent election should be construed only as proving conclusively, although indirectly, that the Free States are not to be supposed indifferent to or unprepared for the per-

formance of their proper duty upon the Texas question. It cannot be inferred that the subject has as yet been duly weighed or fully discussed, and that the people are ready on the instant to rise in the strength of their intelligence and moral firmness to say and to do all that becomes them. Time — a little time used to the best purpose — may be required to make every thing properly understood ; but *let every thing connected with the subject be properly understood*, — let it be seen and felt that a crisis is impending, — let our moral and religious obligations, in connection with our civil and social duties, be so expounded that they shall be universally realized, — let the call be made upon all citizens, without distinction of party, to act together for this purpose alone, — and it must be to disbelieve all that ever has been true of the people of the Free States, all that is glorious in their history, the great principles which have made them what they are, and the admitted tendencies of their institutions, to suppose it doubtful that they will respond to such a call promptly, harmoniously, and effectually.

In Massachusetts, let us thank God, it has never yet been true that an attempt to sustain her character has failed, — or that her example, in any exigency, has been without its effect upon her sister States. She has never been without leaders who seem to have been born for great occasions ; and they have never begun to make the efforts required of them without finding themselves strengthened, beyond their utmost expectations, by public confidence, sympathy, and support. From the commencement of the preparations for the American Revolution, to conceive a high and noble purpose has been in her history but the first step in an irresistible progress towards its accomplishment, under whatever circumstances of difficulty or danger ; and so long as the Bible inspires faith in God, and the Bunker Hill Monument reminds us of what our fathers dared and suffered for liberty, so long may it be expected that no crisis will find the people of Massachusetts, on the score of principle or courage, unprepared to meet it.

To the question, — What is practicable for the purpose of exerting an effectual influence in opposition to the annexation of Texas ? — let the answer be given, that, the question being such as it is, — of vital importance to the rights and interests, and involving the character, of the Free States, — it needs only to be properly presented for consideration to insure its being considered ; and that the people of the Free States, as soon as they can deliberate upon the subject, will be ready to act. That they may deliberate and act at once, — that their proceedings may be as prompt and effective as possible, — it is manifestly expedient that somewhere, and, for the reasons implied in the preceding paragraph, it is proposed that in Massachusetts, a CONVENTION OF THE PEOPLE, *without distinction of party*, should be called, to express the sentiments of the people upon the TEXAS QUESTION, *in all its bearings*. At this Convention let there be a discussion worthy of the object, and of the character of those assembled to accomplish it. Let our leading statesmen expound the true design of the Constitution of the United States, and show how it is proposed to disregard and violate it. Let them exhibit in detail the origin and progress of the Texas project, and show conclusively in what it must result. Let them illustrate, from the political history of the country, the succession of evils which have resulted from the attempt to maintain the Union upon the impracticable basis of an exact and perpetual equipoise of Free and Slave-holding States, — and from regarding as the most sacred provisions of the Constitution those which contain, *without alluding to it*, the avowed guaranties of slavery. Let them show also, historically, how far it was from the intention of the framers of the Constitution to regard slavery otherwise than as a temporary institution, a political and moral evil, and an unsuitable element of a republican government ; and how little they designed to entail upon their posterity, for a succession of generations, and without any provision for relief, such a burden as slavery has proved in all its direct and indirect consequences, — in its influence upon

the master, as well as upon the slave, — and in its tendency to obstruct the establishment of an enlightened national policy, to multiply sources of social and civil degradation, and to excite and produce never-ending and wide-spread disaffection and animosity among those who, as fellow-countrymen, ought to be, and but for this cause might be, political brethren. Let them expose the short-sighted policy which has once and again misled and insnared so many of the constituted guardians of the rights and interests of the Free States, under the pretext of a patriotic compromise of sectional differences, — by inducing them to concur in authorizing the annexation of Slave Territory and the multiplication of Slave States, and in thus preventing, for an indefinite period, the natural extinction of the national curse. Let them refer to the pregnant fact, that it was only the last census which began to show clearly, that, if the Union should remain as it is, it is the destiny of the Free States to ascend, and of the Slave-holding States to descend, in the scale of political power, according to the increase or diminution of their respective delegations in the House of Representatives, and in the electoral colleges ; and that it is just at this juncturé, — before another census shall have put it for ever out of the power of the Slave-holding States to maintain their pretensions, and before the organization of the Free States which are rapidly growing up within the territories of Wisconsin and Iowa shall have destroyed, also for ever, the balance of power in the Senate, upon which they relied as their last security, — that they have resorted, with the madness of desperation, to the anomalous expedient of extending slavery into the regions of a sister republic, and of procuring the annexation of that republic to this, through a series of measures commencing in a clandestine negotiation on the part of the President and his Cabinet, — which, foiled by the wisdom and firmness of a patriotic Senate, is to be followed by an attempt to overthrow the executive functions of the Senate by an utterly unconstitutional exercise of legislative power. In this manner, but to a much greater extent,

let the serious and weighty political considerations of which the subject is fruitful be plainly and forcibly urged upon public attention ; and let the statesmen, who can do it with so much effect, mature and propound *the policy of the Free States*, — which, for the prevention of the threatened evil, should be firmly and fearlessly avowed and adopted.

But let not the voice of statesmen alone be heard upon an occasion of such general interest. Let the many enlightened and virtuous citizens amongst us, to whom political questions are not ordinarily interesting, who retire from party contests, but who, nevertheless, are ready to serve their country when in danger, and who take a deep interest in all movements affecting the welfare of their race, — let our philanthropists from every sphere of beneficence, — let our clergy, who, if they are disciples as well as apostles of Christ, must be sure to unite their prayers and counsels in such a cause, — let our good men of every class and age, — the long retired, and the still active, — all who have hearts to feel, and who dare to obey their consciences, — all who can and must act in more or less important spheres of influence, and whose example will be regarded, — let all such, a select yet mighty multitude, be found, upon the call for a Convention, “ of one accord in one place ” ; and with hearty good-will, let them stimulate, and encourage, and help each other to perform a common duty.

If the members of the Convention are agreed in sentiment and feeling, — as who does not foresee that when they will thus come together they must be ? — let them appoint a committee consisting of such as are worthy of so high a trust, to address to Congress a *Memorial*, which shall set forth, in “ thoughts that breathe and words that burn,” their principles and purposes, — which shall present in bold outline and in its full dimensions the Constitutional argument which the case requires, — which shall recite all the reasons and plainly declare the motives that justify their determination to maintain the Union as it is, in opposition to a design rebuked alike by the object of the

Union and the spirit of the Constitution, and conflicting directly with the highest purposes of a republican government.

In such a Memorial there need be no threat, but there should be the decisive indication of a determined spirit. It should be clothed with strength, the strength of argument ; it should be armed with power, the power of moral and religious principle ; and it should go forth upon a high and holy mission to reach the understandings, the consciences, and the hearts of those to whom it is addressed. It should be a document so marked in its character, and so well adapted in its style and tone to engage and fix public attention, that, from this cause, as well as because it must derive so much authority from the occasion of its adoption, it will be worthy of a historical companionship with the memorable documents emanating from Massachusetts at the period of the Revolution, which wrought conviction in the minds of Burke and Chatham, which flashed the light of prophecy upon a long blinded ministry, and which converted the haughty tone of menace into the submissive accents of conciliation. Such a Memorial should also answer the purpose of an appeal, or should be coupled with an appeal, to the people of the other Free States, — prompting them all to the presentation of similar Memorials, and thus insuring the full effect of their combined efforts.

To have held such a Convention, and to have presented such a Memorial, will have prepared Massachusetts, and in succession all the Free States, for all further duties connected with the object. An organization will have been formed which will necessarily subsist in unimpaired vigor, so long as there shall be occasion for it ; and which, by degrees, can hardly fail to extend itself sufficiently to embrace the great mass of the people of all the Free States, — if so be that nothing short of such a mighty movement can arrest the conspiracy which has been formed against them. When the tide shall flow to this height, — when only the moral influence of the united action of the Free States shall begin to be felt, — who can doubt

that it will sweep away at once, and for ever, all that is opposed to it ? Let the power of the Slave-holding States — as many as they are, and united if they can be — threaten and dare its utmost, be it *disunion*, *nullification*, or, in the worst event, *civil war* ; the Free States will have only to maintain with dignity and firmness their appropriate position *under the Constitution* and *within the Union*, and await without apprehension the certain result of so unequal a contest. Where there is a contest, Freedom can never be overcome by Slavery ; “ the Almighty has no attribute ” that will not take part on the side of truth and justice ; and the sympathy of the free and good, the world over, will cheer them on to a glorious victory.

We may thus anticipate a contest, and we may safely predict a victory ; but, proposing the use of no other weapons than argument and persuasion, and relying upon the moral power of the union of the Free States to render hopeless all opposition, we may indulge the belief that the contest will not involve civil war, and that the victory will be bloodless. The spirit of the age, which is gradually becoming the pacific spirit of Christianity, — the object we have in view, which confines us strictly to a defensive policy, — the absurdity and the madness, on the part of the Slave-holding States, of exposing themselves to the certain consequences of an insurrection of their slaves, while they commit themselves to all the other hazards of a war for slavery with their free neighbours, — all the considerations and all the influences which pertain to the case, seem likely to combine against any other result than an unstained triumph of principle to the victors, and an involuntarily acquired blessing to the vanquished. To insure a pacific and satisfactory result, our efforts should be directed to prevent what it will not be so easy to cure ; and the Slave-holding States, before they shall have proceeded so far as to make it difficult for them to retrace their steps, should be made to see and feel that there is an insuperable obstacle in their way, — and that they can never succeed in intimidating or cajoling the

Free States into a dishonorable and fatal submission. By the avowal of our principles and purposes, and by the manifestation of our readiness to coöperate with each other, they would be enabled to see that we understand our duty, and that we pledge our character to perform it ; and as soon as they feel, as they will then begin to feel, that they cannot safely advance a single step, — that disaster and disgrace await their efforts, — that the area of freedom may be enlarged within the Union as it is, but that the Union can never be extended for the purpose of augmenting the power and the evils of slavery, — it may be presumed that they will hesitate, pause, and begin to reflect, and that a very little reflection will prompt them at least to self-preservation.

In advocating the expediency of acting without distinction of party, such a mode of proceeding has been considered as alone worthy of the object, and as indispensable to its success. Whigs and Democrats may be supposed to be now as much attached as ever to the distinctive principles and measures of their respective parties. But as neither of these parties has been or can be constituted upon the avowed basis of opposing the annexation of Texas and the extension of slavery, it is plain that neither of them will afford a suitable organization for the purpose in view. In the Slave-holding States, it is easy to foresee, that, as the crisis approaches, party divisions will be absorbed in the devotion of all their citizens to the promotion of a common interest. It is desirable to witness in the Free States a corresponding readiness to present a united front in the maintenance of common rights. Unwelcome as may be the annunciation, it is time to declare that *no national party organization can be maintained in good faith until the vexed question of the political power of slavery shall be once more compromised or finally disposed of.* The bitter experience which has made compromises odious warns the Free States to prepare themselves for the alternative, by a timely truce to the divisions which must hinder the effect of the combined exertions of all their citizens.

In Massachusetts, why should we not be prepared to act without distinction of party ? The representatives of the people in the legislature, with perfect unanimity, have already defined the course of the State, and have spoken for their constituents in a tone to which this Appeal is but a faint response. It is understood throughout the country, and it is easy to see that the spirit of the act is everywhere deemed honorable to us, that in reference to the annexation of Texas, the citizens of Massachusetts, as an entire body, — Whigs and Democrats only vying with each other in their zeal to be unanimous, — have committed themselves to the last extremity of uncompromising and unconditional opposition. All that remains for us is, to redeem the pledge, and imitate the example of our representatives.

The Whig party amongst us, none can doubt, is ready to make every effort and every sacrifice which the occasion requires. The Abolitionists must rejoice to find themselves enabled at last to coöperate with their fellow-citizens for a purpose to which they have been specially devoted. But the Democrats, it is surmised, may disappoint our hopes, by yielding to a party obligation to sustain the President of their choice in carrying into effect his favorite measure. It may be that a portion of the leaders occupy just now an awkward position upon this subject, from which they cannot readily extricate themselves. It may be that a portion of the party will be for a time indisposed to lend their influence for any other purpose than the discouragement of our efforts. By the glare of torch-light, if not in open day, they have inscribed "Annexation" upon their party banner, and all their calculations in political astronomy seem to be founded upon the approach of "the lone star" to the national constellation. But let us be just enough to admit that the Democrats of Massachusetts have not, as yet, *as a party*, forsworn their legislative pledge ; and that there is reason to hope that honest friends of equal rights can never become the dupes and tools of the supporters of

slavery. Let us rely upon many of them to remain with us upon the right side of *the great practical question of American democracy* ; not doubting, that, if they are democrats, they will prove themselves free citizens of Massachusetts, and as ready as any others to vindicate the rights and promote the interests of the Free State which gave them birth.

Some will suggest, that, if, once and again, the legislature of Massachusetts has spoken for the people, and without party division, — if the public sentiment of Massachusetts is already everywhere understood, — it cannot be necessary, and is hardly expedient, to “make assurance doubly sure,” and to “do the work over again.” To this suggestion it may be replied, that it is our duty to resist, step by step, the progress of the design which we have undertaken to defeat ; and that, if the legislature has spoken in vain, if the danger has increased, if the evil is approaching its consummation, a further effort should be made to avert it, and a heavier blow should be added to those which have been already struck. The result of the election produced a universal sensation of renewed alarm amongst the opponents of the annexation of Texas ; and no one can have since read the Message of the President and the correspondence of Mr. Calhoun, without feeling that the aspect of the case has changed for the worse, almost beyond the apprehensions of the most desponding, — and that the danger has now become so imminent as to justify and require, on the part of the people of the Free States, not only renewed, but the most direct, concerted, and vigorous action.

It is easy to see that in our community there is a general uneasiness and deep anxiety upon this subject, — that the people desire to come together that they may deliberate and act, and that they anticipate a call for this purpose. The practical question is, not whether any thing shall be done, but whether the considerate and far-seeing will consent to step forward when they are expected and while they are waited for, — and not, by withholding themselves at the important moment, leave

it for others with less wisdom to lead and direct the inevitable movement.

If any thing were wanting to convince the people of Massachusetts that their relation to the Slave-holding States cannot and should not remain what it is now, and that they should begin to inquire what they owe to their character and their rights when both have ceased to be respected, it would seem that the recent proceedings of the people of Charleston and the government of South Carolina in reference to SAMUEL HOAR might serve to dispel the last illusion, and to fix attention—not without a practical result—upon the legitimate effects of the slave-holding system. SAMUEL HOAR, a citizen of Massachusetts, as much respected as any amongst us for his virtues, his talents, and his services,—a personification of the highest intellectual and moral traits of the New England character,—proceeds to South Carolina, under the authority of the Constitution of the United States, to discharge the duties of a legal agent of Massachusetts. The object of his agency is to afford legal advice and assistance to free citizens of Massachusetts, liable to be deprived of their liberty, without the imputation of any crime, through the enforcement of a law of South Carolina, which her own eminent jurist, in the capacity of a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, had years since declared to be utterly unconstitutional. Upon his arrival in Charleston, in a respectful manner he announces his official appointment to the governor of the State. Before, however, he can enter upon the duties of his office, and while he is demeaning himself unoffensively as a private gentleman, this venerable man, with his gray hairs and his immaculate character, is marked as the victim of popular fury. In the face of day, he is rudely ejected from his lodgings, and, amidst the menaces of a mob,—with his daughter, too, as the sharer of his danger,—in the public view of the citizens of Charleston, thus made the abettors, because the passive witnesses, of the outrage,—he is compelled to seek safety in flight.

To make the State in its highest capacity responsible for the atrocity perpetrated by its citizens, the legislature at the same time see fit, by a series of Resolutions, summarily to denounce the object and official character of the agent of Massachusetts, and to authorize the governor to exercise the power of the State in expelling him from its territory. It is to be regretted that the official ceremony of expulsion could not have been enacted, and that this characteristic proceeding of the legislature should have been superseded by the more prompt, though not less dignified, action of the mob. For the present, let it suffice to say that the deed has been done, and that it cannot and shall not be forgotten. It shall be remembered as despoiling the escutcheon of the Palmetto State of the insignia of its former civic and social renown. For the future, let no son of Massachusetts incur the risk of presuming upon the hospitality of South Carolina, but leave her in her infamy to become the neglected abode of a degenerate race.

Let SAMUEL HOAR return to Massachusetts ; but let him come back to witness the spirit with which his wrongs will be redressed, and to be cheered by the sympathy which will be manifested in his behalf. Let him come back to raise his voice where he will be heard with respect, in invoking his fellow-citizens to do justice alike to him and to themselves, and to place themselves in an attitude of uncompromising opposition to all the unconstitutional proceedings and designs of South Carolina. Let SAMUEL HOAR thus present himself, and be thus received in the proposed Convention of Massachusetts.

In conclusion, let the whole subject be viewed for a moment on the dark side, and let us anticipate the crisis in its most discouraging aspect. Let us take it for granted that what has been recommended is to any important extent impracticable,—that there is no deeply rooted and wide-spread earnestness of thought and feeling among the people of the Free States,—that they feel no concern on account of the extension of slavery in itself considered, and that they have ceased to calculate its

consequences, — that, while the many have thus become indifferent, the few who had not been so are inert through despondency, — that the result of the election, supposed to carry with it Annexation as a matter of course, has caused them to feel that all is over, that a protracted struggle must be fruitless, and that the country should be left to its fate. Let us suppose, when there is so much that seems like it, that all parties hug their prejudices and animosities too closely to be prepared to reconcile or suspend their differences for the common good; that Whigs loathe an alliance with Abolitionists, — that Abolitionists care for nothing so much as to defeat Whigs, — and that Democrats, as a party in power, cannot forego the spoils of victory. Let us submit to the conclusion, that in many of the Free States, if circumstances continue as they are, nothing will be attempted, and that in most of them, as yet, nothing can be done. As some would persuade us, too, let us do the penance to suspect that even Massachusetts falters, — that her leaders hesitate, — that they are still counting the cost of the responsibility she has already assumed, — and that they ponder the policy of retiring behind the larger States, and of waiting for an example. With so many discouragements all around, and so many obstacles before us, let us still venture to ask and to answer the question, — **WHAT IS OUR DUTY?** Is it to cease from effort, because there is such necessity and so much scope for exertion? Is it to postpone an attempt which can only become the more hopeless the longer it is delayed? Is it to shut our eyes to the true state of the case, lest the stern rebuke of principle should silence the suggestions of expediency, and a full view of our danger should make us feel that there is no alternative but a death-struggle? Is it to wait for others when we are ready to act? Is it, in the worst view, to submit at once to what through our irresolution appears inevitable, — with dough-faced servility, again to compromise for our disgrace, and to abandon for ever our time-honored station in the vanguard of freedom?

No ! No ! — Massachusetts must be Massachusetts still. Founded on the Rock of Plymouth, the strength of her character is moral and religious principle. Baptized in the fire and blood of the Revolution, her patriotism will abide every test, and prove itself ready for any crisis. Rocked in the Cradle of Liberty, her children cannot be unfilial. Reared in Free Schools, her people must understand their duty. With her veteran and keen-scented sentinel upon the floor of Congress to give the first alarm of the certainty and political danger of this Texas plot, — with the spirit of her sainted CHANNING flashing, with a ray of heavenly illumination, upon every darkened conscience the scorching conviction of its inhuman and unchristian tendencies, — with her trusted Defender of the Constitution about once more to take his post in her behalf upon what seems its only remaining bulwark, — Massachusetts must be — *is she not ?* — forewarned, forearmed, and ready for the contest. She cannot falter, — let her proceed. Amidst difficulties and dangers by which it may be recognized, the path of duty lies plain before her. Let her heart be moved, — all fears will vanish, and every unclean spirit will be cast out. Let her voice be heard, — the country and the world will respond to it. Let her act, — History will record the event.

To sum up all in one word, — *the crisis is at hand*. MASSACHUSETTS IS READY. It only remains for FANEUIL HALL to give the watchword, A CONVENTION — TO THE RESCUE !

A MASSACHUSETTS FREEMAN.

SECOND EDITION.

Since the publication of the first edition, the information has been received, that the President has transmitted a Special Message to Congress, urging immediate action upon his recommendation to annex Texas by a joint resolution. *If any thing is to be done, therefore, by MASSACHUSETTS, and the other FREE STATES, NOT A MOMENT SHOULD BE LOST.*







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